

**North Orange County Special Education Local Plan Area
Superintendent Cabinet
Minutes of Special Meeting July 2, 2025**

Location/Time: North Orange County SELPA Office / 9:00 a.m.

In Attendance:

Dr. Steve McLaughlin, Superintendent, Fullerton Joint Union High School District, and
Chairperson of the North Orange County SELPA Superintendent Cabinet
Dr. Julianne Lee, Superintendent, Buena Park School District
Dr. Mario Carlos, Superintendent, La Habra City School District
Mr. Jim Coombs, Superintendent, Lowell Joint School District
Mr. David Giordano, Associate Superintendent, Administrative Services Division, Orange
County Department of Education
Dr. Robin Gilligan, Executive Director, North Orange County SELPA
Ms. Anjanette Pelletier, North Orange County SELPA Funding Model Consultant

I. Call to Order:

Superintendent Dr. Steve McLaughlin called to order the North Orange County (NOC) Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Special Superintendent Cabinet Meeting at 9:11 a.m.

II. Approval of the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Meeting Agenda for July 2, 2025.

The NOC SELPA Special Superintendent Cabinet Meeting Agenda for July 2, 2025 was presented.

A motion to approve the NOC SELPA Special Superintendent Cabinet Meeting Agenda for July 2, 2025 was initiated by Dr. Stefan Bean. Mr. Jim Coombs seconded the motion.

Vote: 4 Yes, 0 No (2 absent)

Motion carried.

III. Open Session:

Superintendent Dr. Steve McLaughlin called for any communication from the public. No communication from the public was provided.
allocation

IV. Discussion/Information Item(s):

1.0 Working Session: NOC SELPA Funding Model

NOC SELPA Executive Director Dr. Robin Gilligan presented an overview of the process undertaken to review and refine the NOC SELPA funding model. In August 2024, the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet tasked the NOC SELPA Executive Director with initiating this process, which continued throughout the 2024-2025 school year and will continue into the 2025-2026 school year. The process consisted of presentations in November 2024 and January 2025 on the evolution of the NOC SELPA funding model, as well as consultations with Eide Bailly and School Services of California (SSC) regarding multi-district SELPA funding models. The directives of the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet that were given to the NOC SELPA Executive Director at the May 23, 2025 Superintendent Cabinet Meeting were reviewed, and it was reiterated that the priorities of this process are fiscal transparency and support for all NOC SELPA member LEAs.

The NOC SELPA Executive Director then introduced Ms. Anjanette Pelletier from SSC, NOC SELPA funding model consultant and facilitator for the workgroup. The consultant highlighted the workgroup norms, goals, interests, and facilitator commitments before reviewing the project timeline. She then discussed the span of control that the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet has over fiscal allocation policy among its member LEAs and how it differs from the span of control the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet has over funding considerations for programs operated by the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE). The NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet has full authority to implement a funding model based solely on the priorities of NOC SELPA member LEAs. In contrast, the NOC SELPA Superintendents serve as clients/users of OCDE programs along with all other Orange County Superintendents. As such, all OCDE programs and any associated fiscal decisions fall under the purview of the Orange County Superintendent of Schools, not the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet.

Next, the consultant reviewed special education funding sources and the NOC SELPA funding model, which prompted discussion regarding areas that the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet would like to investigate. Following this conversation, the consultant provided an overview of the continuum of multi-LEA SELPA funding model options and the four general categories that a funding model may fall into. It was noted that the current NOC SELPA funding model is aligned to Ed Code and not overly complicated, however the spreadsheet can be challenging to interpret and there are some components to evaluate, as they may be based on historical practices that are no longer relevant.

NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Chairperson Dr. Steve McLaughlin asked for clarification regarding OCDE's role as the NOC SELPA's Administrative Unit (AU) versus its role as a program operator. The consultant noted that the role of a SELPA's AU is outlined in Ed Code and involves the receipt and distribution of special education funds as well as other administrative tasks performed on behalf of the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet. In its role as a program operator, OCDE runs juvenile court and

community day programs that are required under Ed Code as well as offering other programs for students, including special education programs. The programs under OCDE ACCESS and Connections are open to other LEAs both within and outside Orange County.

The consultant then summarized her observations of the NOC SELPA funding model and noted that the NOC SELPA's contribution to the Connections program run by OCDE needs to be addressed. NOC SELPA contributions to ACCESS programs will also need to be reviewed to determine if all Orange County LEAs contribute proportionately to this programming, if it is solely supported by the NOC SELPA member LEAs, or supported by its own generated ADA funds. It appeared to be funded by its own generated funds, however, this question needs to be further explored.

The NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Chairperson then stated for the record that the NOC SELPA's role is not to determine or communicate the impact on Special Schools and/or ACCESS programs costs if the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet moves to change the funding model. The consultant agreed with this statement and noted that the Orange County Superintendent of Schools carries the responsibility of funding their programs and communicating information regarding any changes to all Orange County LEAs.

The consultant then walked through the AB602 base funding calculation and explained where to find the relevant funding exhibits on CDE's website.

Following the presentation, the unanswered question from the May 2025 Superintendent Cabinet Meeting regarding retroactively implementing any funding model changes to previous fiscal years was raised. In response, the consultant clarified that yes, the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet can decide to retroactively implement any funding model changes but there is no guarantee that OCDE or other affected LEAs will pay back any funds, as it is not required for them to do so.

The NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Chairperson noted that given the significant uncertainty regarding federal and state funding going into 2025-2026, the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet needs to make changes to the funding model now and indicated there are four paths forward:

1. Leave the NOC SELPA funding model as is and work through the 2025-2026 school year to make changes going into 2026-2027.
2. Consider and redistribute the Special Schools funding contribution, and not review the other components that were discussed as areas to investigate.
3. Review all suggested components of interest and update the funding model with all changes. It was noted that this option would be best to complete before P-1 certification to minimize potential challenges with managing cash flow.
4. Implement a working model now with the identified major change(s) and then work on smaller updates throughout the year to be implemented for 2026-2027.

The consensus was to move forward with the fourth “hybrid” option and have a proposed model showing the redistribution of OCDE’s Special Schools NOC SELPA funding as an action item on the August 22, 2025 NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet agenda. The consultant will meet with each NOC SELPA Superintendent before the August Superintendent Cabinet meeting to review the proposed redistribution model, gather feedback, and answer any questions at that time. This agenda item will also include discussion regarding other potential changes for 2025-2026 that will need to be decided by November. If necessary, another special Superintendent Cabinet meeting will be scheduled for September or October to ensure any action items are ready for the November NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet meeting.

V. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the July 2, 2025 NOC SELPA Special Superintendent Cabinet meeting was initiated by Mr. Jim Coombs. Dr. Mario Carlos seconded the motion.

Vote: 4 Yes, 0 No (2 absent)

Motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.